(ii) Limit for advances to private retail traders (other than those dealing in essential commodities) (fair price shops and consumer co-operative stores) under the priority sector was enhanced from Rs. 25,000/- to Rs. 2,00,000/- in March, 1994.

(iii) The definition of 'Small Business' under priority sector has been revised in March, 1994 to include these units (Established mainly for the purpose of providing any service other than professional service) whose original cost price of equipment used for the purpose of business does not exceed Rs. 10 lakhs, with working capital limit upto Rs. 5 lakhs.

(iv) The limit for advances to professional and self-employed persons under the priority sector has been increased in may 1994 to Rs. 5 lakhs (from Rs. 2 lahs) of which not more than Rs. 1 lakh should be for working capital requirements. Moreover, in the case of professionally qualified medical practitioners setting up practice in semi-urban and rural areas, the corresponding limits are Rs. 10 lakhs and Rs. 2 lakhs respectivelly.

(d) The limit for housing finance under priority sector has been enhanced from Rs. 2 lakhs to Rs. 3 lakhs per housing unit in February, 1997, in respect of both direct and indirect finance.

Warning to tax evaders

736. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given a stern warning to tax-evaders in the country;

(b) if so, whether despite several benefits under the new scheme, the tax evadors are least bothered about new schemes;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to contemplate strict action against tax evaders in the country now; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (d) Direct as well as indirect taxes have been reduced and the Voluntary Disclousre of Income Scheme has been launched with a view to motivating the tax evaders to comply wiht the tax laws. However, the Government deals firmly with tax-evaders and with that in view, some tax laws have been made more stringent.

Banks under purview of RBI

737. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:
SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are some private sector banks, cooperative banks and such like banks which come within the purview of control of the RBI for ensuring their proper functioning; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) All banks whether in the public sector, private sector or Indian branches of foreign bank—come within the purview of the control of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and the regulatory framework is provided mainly by the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 and partly by RBI Act, 1934. Reserve Bank of India also exercises powers of supervisions under these Acts by way of periodical inspections, calling for off-site returns etc. to ensure proper functioning of these banks.

Fifth Pay Commission Report

738. SHRI IQBAL SINGH:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJI-RAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for non-implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission Report by Government;

(b) the progress made by a group of Ministers on the recommendations made by the empowered committee of Secretaries on the Fifth Pay Commission report;

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this regard; and

(d) the time by when it is likely to be implemented by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (d) The Government have already taken decisions on the major recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission on 18th July, 1997.

Estimated Black Money in the Country

739. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated total black money in circulation in the country at present;

(b) the steps taken by Government to unearth it without resorting to the controversial voluntary disclosure schemes; and

(c) the success achieved thereby?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) An estimate of unaccounted money in the economy was made in 1983-84 by the National Institute of Public Finance & Policy (NIPFP). As per this study the unaccounted money was estimated between Rs. 31584 crore to Rs. 36786 crore.

(b) and (c) The Government has been taking necessary legislative, fiscal and administrative measures, as deemed appropriate, from time to time, to curb the generation and growth of balck money. Rates of taxation have been progressively reduced and slabs of income have been rationalised. At the same time, the Income-tax Act, 1961 contains the number of provisions aimed at curbing the generation of black money. These include, interalia, provisions regarding compulsory maintenance and audit of accounts in appropriate cases under section 44AA and 44AB, restrictions on cash transactions u/s 40A(3) , prosecutions in certain cases under 269SS and 269T, pre-emptive Purchase of properties under Chapter XXC and provisions regarding penalties and prosecution for punishing tax defaulters. The Act also contains provisions for summons, surveys, searches and other investigations to detect tax evasion. These provisions are resorted to in appropriate cases and considerable success has been attained thereby in unearthing black money.

Foreign Investments

740. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the ration of actual foreign investment to the approvals given during each of the last three years;

(b) whether this ratio is much lower as compared to East Asian Countries; and

(c) the reasons for law materalisation of approvals and efforts being made to ensure a better materialisation ratio in furture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) The infromation is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Decline in Performance of Corporate Sector

741. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that performance of the corporate sector is the lowest during 1996-97 over the past 10 years indicating an allround decline, as brought out by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) on the basis of the preliminary results for the year ending March 1997 for over 700 companies;

(b) if so, the detailed reasons for this dismal performance and the pointers this study provides for the Indian economy; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to give boost to the corporate sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) An updated study by the centre for monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) of 1724 non- finance private sector companies (as broght